

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 CAPE T 00546 132336Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

ACDA-10 /087 W

-----132341Z 061236 /62

O R 132250Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5952

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0546

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, RH, SF

SUBJ:IAN SMITH PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING MEETING WITH  
BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY

1. SUMMARY. AT HIS 30-MINUTE PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 13 FOLLOWING  
FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN'S MEETING WITH NEWSMEN (CAPE TOWN 0545),  
IAN SMITH SAID HE AND OWEN HAD NOT MADE MUCH PROGRESS IN  
THEIR 3-HOURS "SINCERE AND HONEST" TALKS EARLIER IN THE DAY.  
HE CONSIDERED IT "UNDERSTANDABLE." HE STRESS THEY HAD AGREED  
THAT SOME MONTHS OF PREPARATORY WORK AND ANALYSIS WOULD BE  
NEEDED TO DETERMINE WHETHER TO GO AHEAD WITH OWEN'S PROPOSED  
CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE, WHICH AT THIS STAGE WAS "A BIT  
VAGUE." HE WELCOMED THE PROVISION OF US PARTICIPATION AND  
SAID HE WAS NEITHER MORE NOR LESS HOPEFUL ABOUT ACHIEVING A  
SETTLEMENT THAN HE WAS LAST YEAR. SMITH NOTED PARTICULARLY  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 CAPE T 00546 132336Z

THAT RHODESIA WAS "KEEPING ALL OPTIONS OPEN", INCLUDING  
CONTINUING CONSIDERATION OF AN INTERNAL SOLUTION. END  
SUMMARY.

2. IN HIS OPENING STATEMENT, SMITH SAID HE AND OWEN HAD "NOT  
MADE A GREAT DEAL OF PROGRESS," WHICH WAS "UNDERSTANDABLE"  
SINCE THIS WAS THEIR FIRST MEETING AND OWEN WAS NEW AS

FOREIGN SECRETARY. OWEN'S ACCEPTANCE OF SMITH'S INVITATION TO VISIT RHODESIA WAS "THE ONE FIRM, POSITIVE AGREEMENT" REACHED. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY HAD PUT FORWARD HIS PROPOSAL FOR A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE WITH THE US AS CO-CONVENEER. THEY HAD AGREED THAT THERE WAS "QUITE A LOT OF PREPARATORY WORK" TO DO IN EXAMINING THE MECHANICS OF SUCH A CONFERENCE. IT WAS NECESSARY TO MAKE SURE OF AVOIDING A "DEBACLE" SUCH AS HAD OCCURRED AT GENEVA. SMITH THOUGHT IT WOULD TAKE "SEVERAL WEEK IF NOT MONTHS" TO DECIDE WHETHER TO PROCEED. HE CHARACTERIZED THE 3-HOUR DISCUSSION AS "SINCERE AND HONEST" AND HE WAS SURE THE BRITISH WERE AWARE OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING RHODESIA AS WELL AS THE WHOLE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

3. DURING THE QUESTION-AND-ANSWER PERIOD, SMITH RETURNED SEVERAL TIMES TO THE NEED FOR SOME MONTHS OF CAREFUL STUDY OF OWEN'S PROPOSALS, WHICH AT PRESENT WERE "A BIT VAGUE." ONLY THEN WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE TO DETERMINE WHETHER IT WAS "A STARTER." HE HAD NOT BEEN ASKED BY OWEN TO REPEAT HIS EARLIER PLEDGE ON MAJORITY RULE, BUT THE MATTER HAD BEEN DISCUSSED. NO SPECIFIC TIME TABLE FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT HAD BEEN SET, THOUGH OWEN, LIKE OTHERS, HAD HIS EYE ON 1978 "IN KEEPING WITH THE TIME-SPAN OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN AGREEMENT." NO COMMITMENTS WERE MADE ON TIMING. RHODESIA WAS NOT ARGUING ABOUT DATES OR TRYING TO DELAY ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVE. PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE WAS ONE OF THE MANY ISSUES TO BE STUDIED. WHETHER PEOPLE LIKE MUGABE COULD TAKE PART IN THE ELECTIONS TO FOLLOW AGREEMENT ON A CONSTITUTION WOULD "DEPEND ON A NUMBER OF CIRCUMSTANCES", INCLUDING ACCEPTANCE

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 CAPE T 00546 132336Z

OF THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE AND ABANDONMENT OF TERRORISM. SMITH WELCOMED PROVISION FOR INCREASED US INVOLVEMENT. "THE SUREST WAY TO SUCCESS" WAS TO BRING IN THE "POWER AND MUSCLE" OF THE "LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD." ASKED HOW HE WOULD RATE THE OWEN PROPOSALS AGAINST EARLIER INITIATIVES ON RHODESIA, SMITH SAID IT WAS TOO EARLY TO SAY. OWEN'S IDEAS WERE NOT YET CLEAR; HE COULD ANSWER THE QUESTION MORE ADEQUATELY IN A FEW MONTHS' TIME. THERE WAS A LONG WAY TO GO BUT "WHILE THERE IS LIFE THERE IS HOPE."

4. SMITH EMPHASIZED THAT RHODESIA WAS "KEEPING ALL OPTIONS OPEN," SINCE THE SUCCESS OF OWEN'S APPROACH WAS NOT ASSURED. THE IDEA OF A REFERENDUM IN CONNECTION WITH AN INTERNAL SOLUTION WOULD BE KEPT IN MIND. THE CONCEPT HAD ORIGINATED WITH MUZOREWA AND THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN CONSIDERING THE MECHANICS. IT WAS MORE COMPLICATED AND DIFFICULT THAN ONE MIGHT IMAGINE, BUT IT WAS "AN EXERCISE WHICH CAN BE CARRIED OUT." IT MUST CONTINUE TO BE ANALYSED. "WE ARE NOT GOING TO CLOSE ANY DOORS."

5. SMITH FOUND THE BRITISH "FOR SOME REASON" HAD SHIFTED OVER THE YEARS BETWEEN FLEXIBILITY AND INFLEXIBILITY. BUT BASICALLY THEY WERE REALISTIC "AS ARE MOST POLITICIANS." HE EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR THE "WELL-KNOWN, SIMPLE, STRIGHT-FORWARD ROLE" OF HONEST BROKER SOUTH AFRICAN HAD CONSISTENTLY PLAYED IN THE EFFORTS TO REACH A SOLUTION TO THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM.  
BOWDLER

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** INTERIM GOVERNMENT, PRESS CONFERENCES, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 13-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977CAPET00546  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770128-1045  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** CAPE TOWN  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770463/aaaacchz.tel  
**Line Count:** 123  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 8f6335a6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 28-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2824903  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** IAN SMITH PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING MEETING WITH BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY  
**TAGS:** PFOR, SOPN, PDEV, RH, SF, (SMITH, IAN), (OWEN, DAVID)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/8f6335a6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009